UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/26801
25 November 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 24 NOVEMBER 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF HUNGARY TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

As the representative of the country holding the current chairmanship of the Central European Initiative (CEI), I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the political part of the document adopted by the Foreign Ministers of CEI (Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) at their meeting held on 19 and 20 November 1993 in Debrecen, Hungary.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) André ERDÖS
Permanent Representative

93-66089 (E) 261193 281193

/...

Annex

Political part

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, met on 19 and 20 November 1993 in Debrecen for the regular autumn ministerial meeting of the Central European Initiative (CEI).

The Ministers expressed their deep regret that, within the framework of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, no lasting peaceful solution to the crisis had been achieved as yet. They condemned the continuing military attacks within the territory of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and reaffirmed their commitment to ensure respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both States. In this context they stressed the utmost importance of finding a political solution. They also appreciated the latest ideas being considered by the European Union and by the Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia on a comprehensive approach aimed at solving, in two stages, all aspects of the crisis, primarily the settlement of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina and a modus vivendi for the areas of Croatia under the mandate of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and the United Nations protected areas (UNPAs) as an interim step, and successively a definitive solution to the problem of the UNPAs, the autonomy of Kosovo and Vojvodina within Serbia, as well as the protection of the rights of the Muslim population in the Sandjak.

The Ministers, deeply concerned about the further deterioration of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, stressed the need to take all possible actions to produce an immediate and unconditional halt to hostilities and establish peace before the coming winter. In this context they called on the Bosnian Serb Army to stop the shelling of Sarajevo and other areas besieged by it. They also called on the Croatian Defence Council (HVO) and the regular Bosnian Army to stop fighting in central Bosnia and Herzegovina and to bring to justice all those responsible for the atrocities being committed in those areas.

The Ministers called upon all parties to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina to take all necessary measures to ensure the free flow of humanitarian aid. They expressed in this regard their full support for the European Union Declaration of 29 October 1993 on the continuation of humanitarian aid to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and called on all parties to cooperate fully with the international relief organizations, so as to provide secure access for deliveries to the population on all territories affected. They called for the urgent opening of the airports at Tuzla, Bihac and Mostar for the delivery of humanitarian aid.

They also condemned all forms of violation of international humanitarian law, specifically the policy and practice of ethnic cleansing, the systematic destruction of mosques, churches, synagogues and other religious monuments and institutions of cultural heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

While expressing great concern about the situation in Croatia, the Ministers welcomed the adoption of United Nations Security Council resolution 871 (1993) and called on the parties concerned to negotiate in good faith and facilitate its rapid implementation, thus contributing to the full realization of the United Nations peace-keeping plan for the country. They reaffirmed the importance of fully reintegrating the UNPAs into the social, economic, political and legal system of Croatia, enabling the return of displaced persons and refugees to their homes, with the necessary provisions for territorial self-government in the areas where the Serbian minority represented the majority of the population according to the latest census, and cultural autonomy of the Serbian ethnic community. In this respect the Ministers considered the latest proposals provided by the Croatian Government to be an important and commendable step furthering the peace process in Croatia. The Ministers, among other matters, acknowledged the importance of immediately reopening all road and rail communications and repairing power and water-supply facilities in Croatia, including the Adriatic oil pipeline.

The Ministers noted that all the countries of the region were being seriously affected by the implementation of the Security Council's sanctions imposed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and asked the United Nations bodies concerned to find appropriate ways of compensating these States in the shortest possible time for the losses they have suffered.

The Ministers appealed to the Government in Belgrade to intensify its efforts for a substantial contribution to the peace process in accordance with all relevant United Nations resolutions and considered such an attitude as one of the major preconditions for admission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to CEI.

The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation among the countries in Central Europe linked by historical and geographical bonds. They considered regional cooperation within CEI not as an alternative but as a complement to multilateral efforts for European integration in such broader forums as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the European Union, the Council of Europe and others. They noted with satisfaction that the cooperation within CEI, as an element of an emerging new European architecture, is a substantial contribution to the strengthening of political and economic stability at an all-European level.

Bearing this in mind, the Ministers agreed to continue strengthening the role of CEI as an important forum for:

(a) Identifying the most urgent needs of its member States, particularly in the fields of economic and infrastructural development, science and technology and culture, with a view to finding appropriate solutions;

(b) Organizing political dialogue on selected issues among the member States;

(c) Formulating, wherever possible, joint positions to be presented at international forums, and elaborating, in special cases common documents;

(d) Exchanging information on experience concerning the implementation of internationally accepted norms and principles of democracy, human and minority rights as well as of a market economy in the CEI region.

On the occasion of the entry into force of the Treaty of Maastricht, the Ministers welcomed the establishment of the European Union, which they regarded as a crucial step in the European integration process. The Ministers expressed the wish that in the future all CEI member States, identifying themselves with the basic principles and aims formulated by the Treaty, would become an integral part of the European Union.

The Ministers had an exchange of views on the development of contacts with non-member States, taking into account the different degrees of interest they have manifested in cooperating with CEI and their involvement in its activities. It was agreed that for the time being the member States would concentrate on efforts to consolidate the Initiative and to improve its efficiency and therefore an enlargement of the CEI appeared premature.

The Ministers took note with satisfaction of the interest shown by Belarus, Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine and stressed the relevance of the Contact Committee as the main forum for discussing and developing relations with them. The need to strengthen the operative role of the Contact Committee and to convene it at Foreign Ministers' level, if so requested, was also emphasized.

Bavaria's continued presence as a special guest in the Contact Committee was also recommended with a view to its active participation in several Working Groups.

Concerning the applications for CEI membership submitted by Albania and the Republic of Moldova, the Ministers welcomed their interest and took note of the decision by the National Coordinators to offer these countries the possibility of participation in the Working Groups of the Initiative. Concrete action on participation in the Working Groups of interest to them would be taken in the light of the results and conclusions of a fact-finding mission undertaken by the chair.

The Ministers also took note of the interest expressed by the Russian Federation in CEI and decided to give a mandate to the Troika of the National Coordinators to continue exchanging information with high-level representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation on matters of mutual interest.

The Ministers encouraged the continuation of expert consultations on selected political issues and underlined the need to concentrate on specific problems. In this context they welcomed the offer by Poland to host the first meeting of a new consultation group on xenophobia, illegal migration and extremist violence in mid-January 1994 in Warsaw. They also mandated the CEI consultation group on CSCE to explore the possibility of joint contribution to the CSCE Budapest Review Conference in 1994. They expressed their support for the admission of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to CSCE as a participating State at its next ministerial meeting in Rome.

The Ministers expressed their support for the efforts aimed at the admission to the Council of Europe of CEI countries that are not members yet.

The Ministers noted with satisfaction the progress made by the Working Group on Minorities in elaborating an instrument for the protection of minority rights in the CEI region. The Ministers called upon the Working Group to conclude the formulation of the above instrument as soon as possible, taking into account the need to strengthen the balance between the role of the State and the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. They expressed their opinion that the success of such an endeavour could be a significant contribution to the work being undertaken by the Council of Europe on the same issue in an all-European framework. To this purpose, the establishment of closer working contacts between the CEI Working Group on Minorities and the relevant bodies of the Council of Europe was deemed desirable. In their opinion the review of the situation of national minorities in individual CEI member States, the identification of problems and the comparison of various views and practices were contributing to improving the spirit of mutual confidence and understanding. Therefore they encouraged the continuation of such reviews in the future.

The Ministers stressed the need for maintaining continuous contacts with regional organizations and groupings, with a view to strengthening intra-European cooperation. They noted with satisfaction the invitation from the Chairman of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation sent to the country holding the CEI chairmanship to attend its Meeting of Foreign Ministers on 9 December in Sofia and recommended acceptance of it.

The Ministers underlined the importance of the development of contacts between parliamentarians within the CEI framework. They took note of the meeting of the parliamentary group that was taking place simultaneously in Szeged. In order to improve coordination they suggested to convene their future meetings at the cities where the Ministers meet.